

## BENJAMIN D'ISRAELI THE ELDER

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his second<sup>1</sup> wife, one Sarah Siprut de Gabay, who, through her paternal grandmother, inherited the blood of the Villa Reals, a fact which her grandson in later days loved to recall. What is more to the point, she seems to have brought her husband both capital and credit, and from this time onward he made steady progress and ultimately attained to substantial prosperity. It is only, however, in the imagination of his grandson that he was ever even a possible rival of the Rothschilds. At his death he left estate real and personal which was sworn under .£35,000. In his will he sums up his vicissitudes of residence by describing himself as 'formerly of Enfield in the County of Middlesex, and then of Woodford in the County of Essex and of Old Broad Street, London, but late of Church Street, Stoke Newington,' where he died. His tomb, restored by his grandson when in the plenitude of his fame and greatness, may still be seen in the Portuguese Jews' Cemetery at Mile End, in the East of London.

Benjamin D'Israeli the elder remained to the end of his life a member of the Sephardi congregation of Bevis Marks, and though, as we are told,<sup>2</sup> he was somewhat lax in his observances and took no great interest in the affairs of the Synagogue, he contributed liberally to its support and increased his donations as the growth of his fortune gave him warrant. On one occasion he even served in the minor office of Inspector of the Charity School, though apparently his zeal in the performance of the duties was not remarkable. From the few glimpses we get of him, he seems to have been a man of winning and kindly disposition. His son Isaac, writing

<sup>1</sup> He had previously married in 1756 Rebecca Mendez Fuvtado, and the offspring of this union was a daughter Eachel, who in her turn became the mother of four daughters by a second marriage with one Angelo Todosto (or Tedcsco). Eachel Todosto eventually migrated with her children to Italy, where their descendants are living at the present day.

<sup>2</sup> Picciotto's *Sketches of Anglo-Jewish History*, p. 296.